

The concept of Kalaa

As Enunciated in the Upanishads

Compiled by:--

Ajai Kumar Chhawchharia
Ayodhya (Faizabad, U.P.)

Full address of Author—36-A, Rajghat Colony, Parikrama Marg,
P.O.—Ayodhya, Pin—224123
Distt.—Faizabad, U.P. India.

Phone: +91-9451290400; +91-9935613060.

Email of Author: < ajaichhawchharia@gmail.com >
< ajaikumarbooks@gmail.com >

Facebook ID < www.facebook.com/ajaikumarchhawchharia8 >

Website: < www.tulsidas-ram-books.weebly.com >

© By Author—All rights reserved by the author. No part of this book may be reproduced in any form or by any means without permission of the author-Ajai Kumar Chhawchharia.



The concept of Kalaa

As Enunciated in the Upanishads

The word Kalaa has a wide application, and briefly it refers to a particular aspect or position or condition or situation of any entity. It is indicative of this entity's deeds which has led it into the present position or situation. It also refers to the special qualities, attributes, virtues, strengths, powers and potentials possessed by it. Other connotations include—(a) shape, form, contours of a thing; (b) special qualities, art, craft, skills, expertise, attributes etc. that one possesses; the shades or aspects of one's overall personality; (c) a division, portion, fraction, phase or degree; (d) any kind of discharge; (e) brilliance, magnificence and grandeur; (f) fraud, deceit, pretensions and trick; (g) maverick and supernatural powers possessed by an entity.

Now, let us look into these various connotations and contexts in which the word Kalaa is applied in practice.

References—(i) Shukla Yajur Veda:-- Brihad Aranyaka Upanishad of, Canto 1, Brahman 5, verse nos. 14-15. (ii) Sam Veda:-- Chandogya Upanishad, Canto 6, section 7. (iii) Krishna Yajur Veda:-- Brahm Vidya Upanishad, verse nos. 18-19; Kalisantarna Upanishad, verse no. 2. (iv) Atharv Veda:-- Mundak Upanishad, Mundak 3, section 2, verse no. 7; Prashna Upanishad, Prashna(Question/Canto) 6, verse no. 2; Nrisingh Purvatapini Upanishad, Canto 2, verse no. 10; Annapurna Upanishad, Canto 1, verse no. 4.

(a) The 16 Kalaas of a man—In the context of the man, the word Kalaa represents the various shades or aspects of his overall personality. Hence, they are the special qualities, art, craft, skills, expertise, attributes etc. that one must possess if he were to successfully reach his target in life. These different qualities and virtues present in a man symbolically make him perfect; they represent his various strengths and potentials, and they are said to be sixteen in number corresponding to and symbolised by the sixteen phases of the moon. Since a man is an exact replica of the 'Viraat Purush', who in turn is a subtle manifestation of the sublime Brahm, these sixteen qualities or attributes of a man refer to the sixteen qualities of Brahm himself that made him the Lord of creation. The presence of all these divine attributes makes a man complete and very powerful. Hence, these sixteen Kalaas represent all the magnificent good qualities that are present in this creation which enable a man to overcome all adversities, hurdles and ill circumstances. Since Brahm is the creature's only sincere well wisher and succour in times of distress and dismay, and since Brahm possesses all the exemplary qualities grouped under the single word Kalaa, a man who is blessed with them is regarded as being equivalent to Brahm. Or in other words, he personifies Brahm with all his dignified virtues that are needed by a man to complete and get across the cycle of birth and death without hurdles.

These sixteen Kalaas of creation that are present in a man refer to the sixteen elements or primary components that form the basis of a man's very existence and his nature and temperament. These are the fundamental building blocks of his subtle and gross body, its characteristic qualities as well as the world surrounding him and how the man lives in and interacts with it.

The *sixteen Kalaas* or aspects or facets of creation have been expressly listed in the *Prashna Upanishad* of the Atharva Veda tradition, in its Canto 6, verse no. 4. These sixteen Kalaas are the following—(i) Pran (प्राण—life; life consciousness; the very essence of creation; the vibrations of life manifested in the form of the vital winds; the rhythm and essential functions pertaining to life), (ii) Shraddha (श्रद्धा—the eclectic virtues of faith, believe, conviction, reverence, respect, devotion), (iii) Akash (आकाश—the all-pervading, all-encompassing sky or space element), (iv) Vayu (वायु—wind, air element), (v) Tej (तेज—energy, splendour, radiance, glory, might, majesty and fire element), (vi) Apaha (अपः—water element which is the all-important ingredient for life), (vii) 'Prithivi' (पृथ्वी—earth element which is the base or foundation for all mortal creation), (viii) Indriya (इन्द्रिय—the organs of the body, both the organs of perception as well as of action), (ix) Mana (मन—the mind and heart complex and their stupendous potentials), (x) Anna (अन्न—food, the element without which life is simply not imaginable because it provides it with the basic nourishment and energy), (xi) Virya (वीर्य—semen, sperms, standing for courage, valour, potency, vitality and prowess), (xii) Tapa (तपः—austerity and penance, tolerance of hardship as a means of penitence, forbearance as well as carrying out strict religious vows in order to purify one's self; the sufferance for some auspicious and noble cause) (xiii) Mantra (मन्त्र—the key or formula to achieve success in any enterprise; it also refers to the ability to give good advise; the power to contemplate and think, concentrate and focus, and then logically arrive at a conclusion; the different mystical formulas consisting of letters or words or phrases which encapsulated various dynamic forces of Nature which could be invoked and harnessed by the creature and help him to utilise the latent cosmic energy, strength and other magnificent powers incorporated in these Mantras for the benefit of creation at large), (xiv) Karma (कर्म—the ability to do deeds and take action; the strength, energy and stamina to perform even difficult tasks), (xv) Loka (लोक—the various worlds, such as the mortal world where the creature lived on the earth, the lower heaven called the Antariksha where the junior Gods and the Spirits of dead creatures would live, and the upper heaven or Brahm Loka where the Supreme Being lives; the different worlds as experienced during the waking state, the dreaming state and the deep sleep states of existence of the consciousness), and (xvi) Naam (नाम—the name assigned to each independent creature; the good name, fame, reputation, honour and glory that a creature has in this world).

They are also called the *sixteen Aakarshini Shaktis* of creation that makes the possessor of these virtues much sought after in society. The word 'Aakarshini' means one that attracts others, and the word 'Shakti' of course means power. These are the following—(i) the power possessed by Pran, the vital life-sustaining winds or airs which maintain the vibrations, the rhythm and the essential functions of life in this creation; (ii) the power

that comes with having Shraddha, i.e. having the eclectic virtues of faith, believe, conviction, reverence, respect and devotion that one has for his chosen deity, for the Supreme Being, and for the aim of life one has set for himself; (iii) the power to be as vast, all-pervading and all-encompassing as the Sky element known as 'Akash'; (iv) the power that is equivalent to that possessed by the Wind or Air element known as 'Vayu' that is so essential for life and its sustenance, and its proof lies in the fact one would die for want of air; (v) the power that is known as 'Tej', literally meaning vigour, vitality, energy, dynamism etc. that are depicted by the Fire element known as 'Agni' that is so essential for life and its sustenance, and its proof lies in the fact one would die for want of heat and warmth; (vi) the powers equivalent to those possessed by the Water element known as 'Apaha' that is so essential for life and its sustenance, and its proof lies in the fact one would die for want of water; (vii) the powers that are equivalent to the earth element known as 'Prithivi' which is the base or foundation for all mortal creation, the power that helps one to sustain others and therefore it makes a person much sought after; (viii) the powers displayed by the various sense organs of the body, called the 'Indriya', because it is these organs that enable the creature to achieve stupendous and most astounding tasks that are even beyond imagination; (ix) the immense and most lauded power of the mind and sub-conscious known as the 'Mana' which has formidable potentials and reach, keeping the creature firmly held in its grip, and without which power nothing can be done or any success achieved in any field whatsoever; (x) the power equivalent to that possessed by food or 'Anna' which is absolutely essential for survival and has such powerful force of attraction that people go long distances in search of food, even kill each other over it; (xi) the magnificent power to create and generate that is shown by the semen known as the 'Virya' which stands for courage, valour, potency, vitality and strength, vigour, dynamism etc., and anyone who possesses these glorious powers or virtues is surely much attractive and useful for others; (xii) the power that comes with doing 'Tapa', meaning austerity and penance, tolerance of hardship as a means of penitence, forbearance, carrying out strict religious vows in order to purify one's self, sufferance for some auspicious and noble cause, etc., virtues that make the person who possesses them have a magnetic appeal for others; (xiii) the powers inherent in the various mystical 'Mantras' which are great spiritual formulas with astounding potentials to fulfill all desires of the user; they are like keys to achieve success in any enterprise; it also refers to the ability to give good advice; the power to contemplate and think, concentrate and focus, and then logically arrive at a conclusion; the mystical powers that are an integral part of the Mantra and represent the various dynamic forces of Nature which could be invoked and harnessed by the creature and help him to utilise the latent cosmic energy, the strength, the dynamism and other magnificent powers incorporated in these Mantras for the benefit of creation at large; (xiv) the power to do various deeds and take actions, the strength, energy and stamina to perform even difficult tasks, the powers that are an integral part of the theory of doing Karma; (xv) the powers that makes a man so powerful that he can have control over the various worlds called the three Lokas, i.e. the mortal world where the creatures live on earth, the lower heaven called the Antariksha where the junior Gods and the Spirits of dead ancestors live, and the upper heaven or Brahm Loka where the senior Gods live; it also refers to the terrestrial world, the heavens and the nether world, as well as the different worlds as experienced during the waking state, the dreaming state and the deep sleep states of

existence of the consciousness; and finally (xvi) the inherent power in one's good name, the power of 'Naam'; this gives the person fame, acclaim, authority and respect in society; it bestows reputation, honour and glory that a person so much seeks in this world. This power of good name and its value in terms of making the man famous and eternal in the memory of others is so attractive that everyone wishes to gain some good name for himself in this world. A person with good name attracts others towards himself.

When we refer to the man, the Sanskrit word for him is *Purush*. Now, this word Purush refers to someone who resides in a 'Pur'—a city. [Refer—(a) Krishna Yajur Veda's Yogshikha Upanishad, Canto 1, verse nos. 72, 165; Canto 5, verse no. 2. (b) Atharva Veda's Prashna Upanishad, Canto 4, verse no. 3.] In the Upanishads, this city is the human body, and the resident is the 'Atma' which is the all-pervading and cosmic Consciousness called the supreme Brahm residing inside the individual body of the creature as his 'true self', as his true identity. [Refer—Brihad Aranyaka Upanishad, Canto 2, Brahman 5, verse no. 18.]

Now, this man who is being addressed as the 'Purush' is no ordinary human. In order to be rightly called a Purush he must have become pure and cleansed of all sins and evils. [Refer—Brihad Aranyaka Upanishad, Canto 1, Brahman 4, verse no. 1.] Therefore, the 'Purush' is the Supreme Being (Brahm) residing in the body of the individual creature as his pure conscious Atma, the entity that is free from all contaminations, corruptions and blemishes. So, in the enlightened view of the Upanishads, the Purush when referred to the 'man' is not his physical body but the Atma.

There are said to be sixteen Tattvas or essential units or elements in creation. They are the following—the five organs of perception (ear, eye, nose, tongue and skin) + the five organs of action (hand, leg, mouth, anus and genital) + the five Prans (the five subtle forms of the vital winds present inside the body—such as Pran, Apaana, Samaana, Vyana and Udaana) + one Mana (mind) = 16.

The fact that there are sixteen Tattvas is mentioned in *Tripadvibhuti Maha-Narayan Upanishad* of Atharva Veda, Canto 5, paragraph no. 15.

These sixteen elements or units created by the Supreme Being are the sixteen Kalaas or aspects or fractions of creation. In other words, this visible creation is made up of these sixteen units in different ratios just like a colourful picture in mosaic is prepared by an expert artisan from bits and pieces of glass or stone which are independent units in their own right but when incorporated in the mosaic that forms the colourful picture they become an inseparable and an integral part of the latter. Even if one piece is removed, the picture is disturbed.

In simple terms it means that a person's total composite personality, his characteristic attributes and individuality, his vitality and stamina, his prowess, powers and strength, his drive and vigour et al can be divided into sixteen parts.

The *Kalisantarna Upanishad* of Krishna Yajur Veda, in its verse no. 2 says that these sixteen Kalaas are like sheaths or veils covering the Atma or 'self' of the man, and he can realise this glorious divinity residing in his bosom only when these Kalaas which are like impediments or hurdles in self and Brahm realisation are removed. When this Upanishad describes them as 'hurdles or impediments' in realising the glory of the 'self' it implies that although all these sixteen qualities are related to achieving glory and majesty in the world, they have nothing to do with 'self-realisation' and 'Brahm-realisation' which is possible only by abandoning everything related to this world as well as the body both in its gross part and its subtle part.

The *Prashna Upanishad* of Atharva Veda, Canto 6, verse no. 2 says that the divine entity that exhibits sixteen divine attributes lives in the body itself.

The *Brihad Aranyaka Upanishad*, Canto 1, Brahman 5, verse nos. 14-15 describes the sixteen Kalaas of Prajapati (the Lord of creation/world) in a symbolic manner by alluding to the phases of the moon. The fifteen nights of the dark or the bright phases of the moon when the disc of the moon continuously changes + one fundamental truth of the moon which is its disc that never changes inspite of its view from the earth that constantly changes.

(b) The 15 Kalaas—Refer:--Atharva Veda's Prashna Upanishad, Canto 6, verse no. 4, and Mundak Upanishad, Mundak (Canto) 3, section 2, verse no. 7.

The *Mundak Upanishad* of Atharva Veda, in its Canto 3, section 2, verse no. 7 mentions of the fifteen Kalaas of a wise man merging into one main Kalaa, but it has not mentioned which these fifteen Kalaas are. However, the Prashna Upanishad of Atharva Veda tradition, in its Canto 6, verse no. 4 has cited sixteen units of creation that have emerged from Brahm. If the primary Pran or life consciousness that was formed in the very beginning of creation is removed from the list, we come to the remaining fifteen units which are like Kalaa as they represent the fifteen aspects of creation. Hence, these fifteen Kalaas would be the following—Shraddha (the virtues of devotion, faith and belief), Akash (the sky or space element), Vayu (the wind or air element), Jyoti (the light and radiance personified in the form of the fire element), Aapha (the water element), Prithivi (the earth element), Indris (the different sense organs of the body), Mana (the thinking mind and the emotional heart), and Anna (the food that would sustain the other elements of creation which had combined to give shape to the creature).

From the Anna were created the following other units or elements of creation—the Virya (the sperm which is the carrier of life and the metaphor for valour, strength, stamina, vitality, vigour, energy, potentials etc., Tapa (austerity, penance and sufferance for some noble and auspicious cause), Mantras (the different mystical formulas consisting of letters or words or phrases which encapsulated various dynamic forces of Nature which could be invoked and harnessed by the creature and help him to utilise the latent cosmic energy, strength and other magnificent powers incorporated in these Mantras for the benefit of creation at large), Karma (the ability to do deeds and take action; the strength, energy and

stamina to perform even difficult tasks), Loka (the various worlds, such as the mortal world where the creature lived on the earth, the lower heaven called the Antariksha where the junior Gods and the Spirits of dead creatures would live, and the upper heaven or Brahm Loka where the Supreme Being lives; the different worlds as experienced during the waking state, the dreaming state and the deep sleep states of existence of the consciousness), and Naam (the name assigned to each independent creature).

(c) The 8 Kalaas of a man—The eight Kalaa of a man are the eight characteristic features by which all men are classified in this world. All men are classified into one or the other type depending on one or more of these eight attributes. These eight apparent criterions used for classification of all humans are the following—his name, caste, complexion, birth or family, race, nationality, Ashram (one of the four phases in life, such as Brahmacharya, Grihastha, Vaanprastha and Sanyas), and Varna (class of society such as Brahmin, Kshatriya, Vaishya, Shudra and Nishad or Chandala). [Ref. Saraswati Rahasya Upanishad, verse no. 25 of Krishna Yajur Veda.]

(d) The 5 Kalaas of a man—From the metaphysical point of view, the five Kalaas in a man are the following sheaths that surround his Atma or pure consciousness. Since the true identity of the man is his Atma or pure consciousness, these five sheaths or Koshas are also called the five types of Atmas. They are the following—the Anna Maye Kosh or the food sheath, the Pran Maye Kosh or the vital wind or air sheath, the Mano Maye Kosh or the mental sheath, the Vigyan Maye Kosh or the intellect sheath, and the Anand Maye Kosh or the bliss sheath. These sheaths cover the Atma and determine the Atma's temperament, nature, inclinations and behavioural patterns in this world.

The *Kathrudra Upanishad* of Krishna Yajur Veda tradition, in its verse nos. 21-26 describe these five Koshas or Kalaas of the Atma in detail. The Atma is given a name according to the sheath in which it is reflected—such as the Anna Maye Atma pertaining to the Anna Maye Kosh (verse no. 21), the Pran Maye Atma pertaining to the Pran Maye Kosh and the Mano Maye Atma pertaining to the Mano Maye Kosh (verse no. 22), the Vigyan Maye Atma pertaining to the Vigyan Maye Kosh and the Anand Maye Atma pertaining to the Anand Maye Kosh (verse no. 23). Verse nos. 24-26 describe how these five sheaths appear as consecutive layers surrounding the central core called the Atma.

(e) The 5 Kalaas of Pran—There is another connotation of the phrase five Kalaas of a man in the context of the word Pran. Hence, there are *five Kalaas of the Pran*. The Pran is the vital wind or air element that sustains life in a man. The chief form of this air element that sustains life in the body is called 'Pran', and the term is usually applied to the breath. But besides this, there are four other types of main Prans such as Apaana, Samaana, Udaana and Vyana. These are the names given to the vital wind in order to distinguish between the various functions or roles that it performs inside the body in order to study this air or wind element in a comprehensive way just like we classify any given subject into various streams to facilitate study and analysis. Therefore, hypothetically, the Pran is divided into

five main Kalaas. Thus, there is the main Pran and its four Kalaas as follows—(i) The ‘Pran’ is the wind element which, as breath, is exhaled as well as inhaled and is responsible for infusing and sustaining life in the body; it is considered the chief wind in the whole setup because without life no other wind would be of any significance to the creature. (ii) The ‘Apan’ is the wind that passes down the intestines and is responsible for digestion of the food taken by the creature and its excretion through the anus and urinary organs (kidneys). (iii) The ‘Saman’ is the wind that is responsible for equal distribution of nourishment throughout the body, as well as in circulation of blood. (iv) The ‘Udan’ is the wind that helps the body to rise and move about, it also helps the body to expel toxic waste gases in the body through the nostrils and mouth in the form of exhalation and cough. (v) And finally the ‘Vyana’ is the wind that helps in maintaining equilibrium and pressure within the body, and it also controls the functioning of the other winds.

(f) The 5 Kalaas as revealed in the *five categories of Jivas or living beings*—The concept of the five Kalaas can be understood in another way in the context of various forms that the Atma or pure consciousness takes in this world. All living beings are called Jivas. They are of five primary categories of Jivas. The basic life forms have one or two Kalaas to start with, and then it progresses to the level of humans and Gods having five and more Kalaas. All the Jivas (living beings) in the world have been classified into five basic categories and their respective Kalaas are as follows—(i) Udbhij—these are those life forms that are born from seeds, such as members of the plant kingdom. These have only one Kalaa called Anna Maye Kalaa. In other words, they depend on food and become food for others higher up in the evolutionary ladder. (ii) Swadej—they are those which are born from dampness and sweat, such as fungi, algae, bacteria, germs, mosquito, lice, flies etc. They have two Kalaas, viz. Anna Maye and Pran Maye. That is, they are formed from food, they live for food and they die as food. Besides this, they also exhibit signs of life, e.g. the mosquito and lice have life like any other member of the animal kingdom. (iii) Andaj—they are placed higher up in the evolutionary ladder, and are born from eggs, whether inside the mother’s womb or outside. Such birds as pigeon, sparrow, parrot, peacock etc. come under this category. They have three Kalaas which are Anna Maye, Pran Maye and Mano-maye. The last Kalaa refers to the fact that such creatures have a mind and heart which enables them to think, albeit in a primitive level. (iv) Jaraayuj—these are the creatures that are born as embryo that develops inside the mother’s womb. Under this class come the animals such as horses, cows, dogs, elephants etc. They have four Kalaas, such as Anna Maye, Pran Maye, Mano-maye and Vigyan Maye. (v) The last Kalaa refers to their ability to have a higher level of thinking ability called intelligence. The human being comes under this last category with the added benefit of having five Kalaas. Besides the four Kalaas mentioned above in other creatures of this category, the man has the fifth one and it called the Anand Maye Kosh. It is only possessed by a man and not by other creatures in the sense that the man can realise the true meaning of the terms ‘bliss and happiness that is eternal and substantial’ by the virtue of his attaining higher level of intelligence and his ability to delve into the secrets of the concept of truth itself and then realising that kind of happiness and bliss that is not superficial and which is not limited to enjoyment of the sensual pleasures of the body and the material comforts

of the world, but which has a holistic and all-inclusive dimension that incorporates the Spirit or the Soul.

(g) The 3 Kalaas of a man—Besides the above, some humans are said to possess three other special qualities which make certain people very unique and different from others. These are the following:—(i) Atishaayani Kalaa—this enables a person to successfully accomplish certain tasks very quickly and in a very short period of time which would be unthinkable to be completed even in the entire lifetime by an ordinary man. Such people are born prodigies and are said to be gifted with certain eclectic qualities and characters that are not normal. For example, the Adi Shankacharya, the great philosopher and exponent of Advaita Vedanta and the person who had written matchless and unbeatable commentaries on the principle Upanishads besides establishing the four great pilgrim sites in the four corners of India, had completed in a young age of just ten-twelve years what would take an entire life to do. (ii) Viprinaamini Kalaa—this entitles the man to acquire the eight mystical powers called the Siddhis (such as Anima, Garima, Mahima, Laghima, Praapti, Praakramye, Ishwatwa and Vashistha) and show magical powers to become small or big, light or heavy, or even enter the body of another person or assume any shape or form he wants. (iii) Sankaamini Kalaa—this enables a person to transfer and install his own stupendous divine and mystical powers in another person and the second person can perform deeds that he would not be able to do himself and is even stunned at his own achievements. We have the example of this in Swami Vivekanand in whom his Guru revered Ramkrishna had established some divine spark which enabled the great swami to leave an indelible mark on the pages of history and religion by his landmark achievements and conquering the world by his speeches in America where he established the foundation of Vedanta.

(h) The 8 Kalaas of the Gods—The eight Kalaas of the Gods and their incarnations or manifestations—Since there are said to be a total of sixteen Kalaas and the ordinary man can possess the maximum of these five Kalaas with those who are especially gifted having an additional three as narrated above (bringing the total Kalaas possessed by human beings to $5 + 3 = 8$), the remaining eight ($16 - 8$) belong to the Gods or their incarnations or manifestations. These are the following—(i) Prabhvi—this is that magical and divine power possessed by the entity that enables it to make possible things that are impossible. For example we have the manifestation of Lord Narsingh (half man and half lion incarnation of Lord Vishnu from a stone pillar to protect his devotee Prahalad from being killed by his own demon father). (ii) Kunthini—this enables the entity to neutralize the any of the effects of the five elements of creation, including their bad effects. For example we have Lord Shiva who drunk the horrible poison called Halaahal that emerged as a result of the churning of the ocean without letting that corroding and very potent poison from harming him. (iii) Vikaasini Kalaa—the ability to develop, grow, expand or increase to any size, in any form and in any way one wishes. For example we have Lord Vaaman, the dwarf mendicant, who had measured the entire world in his three steps. (iv) Maryaadini—this is the character, attribute or quality which forces the God-head to observe and exhibit exemplary virtues of righteousness, probity and propriety inspite of

his ability of doing anything it wants. It virtually ties him down or restricts him to following a strict and exemplary code of conduct that he successfully implements; these codes are difficult even for the Gods to implement. For example we have Lord Ram who led an exemplary life of righteousness, auspiciousness, probity and propriety as well as observe all the character traits and attributes that are so common with all the human beings inspite of the fact that he was an incarnation of Lord Vishnu, the almighty, omniscient, omnipotent, omnipresent and all-incorporating Viraat Purush who is a manifestation of the Supreme Being. (v) Sanghridini—this enables the God-head to supersede or overrule the laws of Nature and perform miracles that even defy its laws. For example, Lord Krishna had created flowers and fruits even without season. (vi) Aalhaadini Kalaa—this enables one to physically remain away but spiritually be constantly near one's object of devotion or contemplation and serve him or her. This is the way Radha was able to enchant Lord Krishna inspite of not remaining with him at all times. (vii) Paripurna—this word itself implies something that is wholesome and complete in all respects. It can therefore exhibit all the sixteen qualities or Kalaas in one go, or is the entity that embodies all these qualities in its self. Amongst the incarnations of Lord Vishnu, Ram and Krishna are said to be Paripurna. The supreme Brahm is 'Paripurna' because nothing is missing from him; it is wholesome and complete. And finally, (viii) Swarupaa-wasthiti—this means the ability to withdraw or collect all the Kalaas exhibited by an entity and revert to its original and primary form when it is so wished by it. For example, at the end of the Dwapar Yuga, Lord Krishna had withdrawn all his Kalaas into himself before bringing to close his sojourn on this earth.

(i) The 16 Kalaas of the Moon—This refers to each of the sixteenth part of the moon's diameter/disc, or one of the various phases of the moon. The moon waxes and wanes in a fourteen day phase—each day it is different from the other. Thus we have fourteen Kalaas of the moon. Added to this is the full moon and the dark moon—i.e. two more Kalaas. Therefore the total Kalaas of the moon are $14 + 2 = 16$. These fourteen Kalaas have the following names—Amritaa, Maanadaa, Pushaa, Tushti, Pushti, Rati, Dhriti, Shashini, Chandrika, Kanti, Jyotsnaa, Sri, Pritirangaa, Purnaa and Swarajaa.

That is why lord Krishna is said to belong to the Moon race because he possessed sixteen Kalaas. The symbolism is very stark.

(j) The 12 Kalaas of the Sun—This refers to each of the twelfth part in which the sun's diameter/disc has been divided. They are called 'Dwaadash Aditya', meaning the twelve forms in which the Sun God is known. They are the following—Tapini, Taapini, Dhumraa, Jwaalini, Ruchi, Shushumna, Bhogadaa, Vishwaa, Bodhini, Dhaarini and Kshamaa.

That is why lord Ram was said to belong to the Solar race because he had twelve Kalaas possessed by the Sun. There is an obvious parallel here.

(k) Other forms of Kalaas—Other connotations of the word are the following:-- (i) the division of time equivalent to about eight seconds; (ii) one degree out of the three

hundred and sixty degrees. So when this term 'Kalaa' is applied to that supreme Truth, also known as the supreme Brahm which is complete and wholesome, it implies that what is being referred to is but only one or more fraction of the whole, and therefore this one or more fraction cannot be a complete definition of the whole. At the best, it can give a rough idea of the principal, but not the exact idea of what constitute *Brahm*. This Brahm is an entity so wholesome and grand, so majestic, so magnificent, so stupendous and astounding that it transcends the definitions or parameters set by this particular word. That Truth or Brahm is beyond their reach and dimension; these various connotations of the word cannot either be applied to that Truth or Brahm nor can they define it in its entirety in any way.

(l) The 64 Kalaas of Brahm—It is said that the complete Brahm has sixty four Kalaas. If these are divided into four quarters or quadrants or aspects or symbolic legs of Brahm, three-fourths is in the realm of the unknown (heaven) and only one-fourth is in the form of the visible creation (world). Therefore, if Brahm is a complete cycle of sixty four Kalaas, then the known physical world has $64/4 = 16$ Kalaas. It is a quadrant of Brahm. (Rig Veda, 10/90/4).

It is said that Brahm has four 'Paads' or legs which symbolise the four corners of creation. That is, Brahm surrounds this entire creation from all sides. Out of these four legs, the visible world represents one. The rest of the creation stands for the remaining three legs. According to another theory, Brahm is said to have sixty four Kalaas or aspects or levels. Out of these, the known world is represents Brahm's sixteen Kalaas, i.e. this world is only one fourth aspect of the entire Brahm—a fact metaphorically depicted by saying that Brahm can measure this world in one step. The rest is the invisible macrocosmic aspect of Brahm which is beyond imagination and comprehension. This is obvious because if one fourth is so difficult to understand, one can easily understand the astounding nature and stupendity of the remaining three fourths.

(m) The Kalaa in the context of OM—In the geometrical symbol of Brahm which is pronounced as 'OM', these three Naad, Bindu and Kalaa appear as a crescent moon or a shallow bowl with a dot at the center placed on the top of the symbol for OM. This Naad is like a big trough and represents the cosmic bowl or crucible in which the primary cosmic gel was placed to initiate the process of creation. The Bindu appears to indicate the pin-point source of heat, radiation or any other activating source placed just above this crucible to inject sufficient energy in to the primary fluid and activate it. It acts like a source of energy directed at the crucible (Naad) set off the chain reaction that would ultimately culminate in the creation. The Kalaa which refers to the various phases of the moon would indicate the different stages through which the entire process passed from the initial stages of creation to its complete closure. But even as the parents of a child do not undergo any apparent change while the embryo develops in the mother's womb, the Supreme Being remained the same all the while the creation developed and unfolded in the cosmic womb represented by Mother Nature. Another example to explain is the moon's disc which appears to change every single day but all know that it remains the

same, and the apparent change in its shape is only due to the angle with which its lighted or dark surface is viewed from the earth.

The *Dhyan Bindu Upanishad* of Krishna Yajur Veda tradition, in its verse no. 13 proclaims that OM has eight Kalaas or facets or parts. They are the letters A, U, M, Naad, Bindu, Kalaa, Kalaa-teet and Param.

(n) The Kalaa in the context of the Jiva or the living being— The *Brahm Vidya Upanishad* of Krishna Yajur Veda, verse nos. 33, 37-40 describe the concept of ‘Kalaa’ vis-à-vis the living creature. Let us examine what it has to say on the subject.

“Verse no. 33 = The consciousness present in the gross body of the creature called the Jiva-atma should be regarded as the one that has different Kalaas, i.e. as the one which shows various attributes and characteristic qualities and features typical or specific to that body. On the other hand, the same consciousness when it is freed from the limitations and tainting effects of the gross body becomes free from these limiting factors and thus becomes one without any Kalaas, i.e. it has no attributes or special characteristic features that are specific to it, that can limit its virtues and qualities to a particular set of attributes and characteristics¹. [Refer verse nos. 37-40.]

This eclectic and divine knowledge that is received by the grace of an enlightened Guru, who is himself self-realised and enlightened, is universal and uniform. This knowledge enlightens the aspirant of the fact that the Atma is to be realised as being the pure and true ‘self’ of all the living beings, including the aspirant himself. It is the same in all the creatures; it has none of the attributes exhibited exclusively by any one sample creature. Externally all the living beings exhibit different characters and attributes which are specific to each one of them simply because the gross body is a variable and changing entity as compared to the Atma, and it is the gross body that is usually regarded as the identity of the creature simply because it is easily visible and easy to deal with as compared to the invisible Atma which is an ethereal spirit.

So, two creatures appear to be different from one another because their bodies are wrongly treated as their identity instead of their Atma which is actually their true ‘self’. Since this error creeps in, the perception about the creature changes—i.e. the immaculate, immutable, uniform, eternal and imperishable Atma appears to be tainted and ever-changing. Therefore, obviously, when the gross body is removed from the scene, what remains is the pure consciousness or the Atma which is always and invariably the same in all the creatures irrespective of the type of the body that they have (33).

[Note—¹To understand this phenomenon we can take a simple example. Water in its purest form consists of two atoms of hydrogen and one atom of oxygen. But this water assumes so many shapes and colours according to the vessel in which it is kept, or it acquires so many tastes such sweet or salty, or is assigned such attributes as being hot, warm, cold, scalding, boiling etc. Then this same molecule of water has different names such as water, vapour, moisture, ice, snow, rain, sleet, river, stream, ocean, sea, lagoon, lake, pond, well and puddle. Is there any fundamental difference in water molecule in any of these different varieties of water bodies? No, certainly not. The same thing applies to

the Atma which is also atomic and microscopic like the basic unit of water called its 'molecule'. When the Atma is seen in the context of the physical body of the creature, it shows so many attributes, but shorn of this body and seen in its pristine pure form it becomes an entity that is one and non-dual.]

“Verse no. 37 = The entity that has a definable and tangible form, characteristic features, qualities and attributes which gives it its individuality is regarded as ‘Sakal’, i.e. one that has one or more Kalaas. Such entities are gross and have a physical dimension. On the other hand there are certain things which do not come under this definition; they are called ‘Niskal’, i.e. one that has no Kalaas. Such entities are subtle, ethereal and sublime; they lack a physical dimension.

To illustrate, the flower is Sakal, while its fragrance is Niskal. Similarly, the tree is Sakal, while its shade is Niskal (37).

[Note—The flower has a gross body and a physical structure, it can be touched, seen and felt, but its fragrance is a subtle thing that cannot be even precisely defined. Similarly, the tree has a definitive form and characteristic features; it is vibrant and colourful; it is full of variable life forms and a resting place for a wide variety of insects, birds and centipedes. On the other hand, its shade is obviously something that no one can touch, smell and precisely describe; it is dark, gloomy and intangible; it has no trace of life whatsoever in it.]

“Verse no. 38 = In the aforesaid way, one can observe the existence of both the Sakal and the Niskal aspects of creation everywhere in this world. The entity that comes under the ambit of the definition of Sakal is a medium or instrument or aid which is employed or used to arrive at or to know or to deduce or to learn about or to gain access to the entity that comes under the ambit of Niskal (38).

[Note—The different scriptures and other means of acquiring the knowledge of the quintessential truth of the supreme transcendental Brahm would come under the category of Sakal because they are tangible and known instruments employed to arrive at some other entity that is intangible and unknown. The latter is Niskal in the sense that it is most sublime and subtle, having no attributes and definitions applicable to it in a specific manner. The Sakal is one which has Kalaas, which has certain attributes and qualifications, while Niskal has no Kalaas, it has no attributes and qualifications. In the instance cited in verse no. 37, when one sees a particular flower one immediately gets an idea of the type of fragrance that it emanates. Similarly, when one sees a tree from afar one instantly gets an idea of the type of shadow it produces and the area this shadow covers. For instance, when a group of people look for shade on a hot summer day, they search for a tree that is large and has a huge cover of foliage because they take it for granted that its shade would be large and dense enough for them to rest.]

“Verse no. 39 = An entity that is described as being ‘Sakal’ has one or more Kalaas (aspects, forms, fractions, attributes, qualities, qualifications etc.) in it as its integral part or characteristic feature. On the other hand, that which is said to be ‘Niskal’ has no such limitations imposed upon it. [That is, the Niskal entity is immutable, indivisible, non-dual and one single subtle and sublime whole. It cannot be portioned or partitioned into

segments or fragments that have specific Kalaas for study and analyses, or for any other reason.]

Those entities that come under the definition of Sakal (i.e. ones that have various Kalaas) have one, two and three Kalaas. They are differentiated by and classified into different classes or segments based on the number of Kalaas they have (39).

[Note—This is a very interesting verse. Let us see how it describes the various levels of creation in an encrypted language. The living world consists of both the animals as well as the plants. The basic life forms have one or two Kalaas to start with, and then it progresses to the level of humans and Gods having five and more Kalaas.

The creatures in the living world have been classified into four categories and their respective Kalaas are as follows—(i) Udbhij—these are those life forms that are born from seeds, such as members of the plant kingdom. These have only one Kalaa called Anna Maye Kalaa. In other words, they depend on food and become food for others higher up in the evolutionary ladder. (ii) Swedaj—they are those which are born from dampness and sweat, such as fungi, algae, bacteria, germs, mosquito, lice, flies etc. They have two Kalaas, viz. Anna Maye and Pran Maye. That is, they are formed from food, they live for food and they die as food. Besides this, they also exhibit signs of life, e.g. the mosquito and lice have life like any other member of the animal kingdom. (iii) Andaj—they are placed higher up in the evolutionary ladder, and are born from eggs, whether inside the mother's womb or outside. Such birds as pigeon, sparrow, parrot, peacock etc. come under this category. They have three Kalaas which are Anna Maye, Pran Maye and Mano-maye. The last Kalaa refers to the fact that such creatures have a mind and heart which enables them to think, albeit in a primitive level. (iv) Jaruyuj—these are the creatures that are born as embryo that develops inside the mother's womb. Under this class come the animals such as horses, cows, dogs, elephants etc. They have four Kalaas, such as Anna Maye, Pran Maye, Mano-maye and Vigyan Maye. The last Kalaa refers to their ability to have a higher level of thinking ability called intelligence. The human being comes under this last category with the added benefit of having five Kalaas. Besides the four Kalaas mentioned above in other creatures of this category, the man has the fifth one and it called the Anand Maye Kosh. It is only possessed by a man and not by other creatures in the sense that the man can realise the true meaning of the terms 'bliss and happiness that is eternal and substantial' by the virtue of his attaining higher level of intelligence and his ability to delve into the secrets of the concept of truth itself and then realising that kind of happiness and bliss that is not superficial and which is not limited to enjoyment of the sensual pleasures of the body and the material comforts of the world, but which has a holistic and all-inclusive dimension that incorporates the spirit or the soul.

Since the present verse deals with one, two and three Kalaas, it refers to the Udbhij, Swadej and Andaj class of creatures.]

“Verse no. 40 = That which is half of a Kalaa, i.e. one that is so small and miniscule that it is not even one single unit or Kalaa of any given entity but is only a fraction of it (that is, an entity that is smaller than one molecule and only a part of it, i.e. the atom), is to be regarded as ‘Paraa’, literally meaning knowledge of things that are beyond the range of perception and comprehension, or that which is subtle and sublime (in the sense that it is invisible, miniscule and microscopic as compared to the Kalaa which has grosser and

more tangible form). [This refers to the subtle body of the creature such as his mind and intellect, as well as his various qualities which form his basic character but which cannot be physically seen or felt. These effect his Atma, which is a fraction of what the supreme transcendental Brahm is, hence most apt to be called one with the ‘half Kalaa’.]

Beyond the state of Paraa, or one that transcends this state, is called ‘Paraatpar’, literally which is beyond the furthest point of imagination and comprehension, something that transcends the boundary of knowledge and comprehension. [This refers to the supreme transcendental Brahm who has no Kalaa or embodies all the Kalaas in him to form a one single immutable whole.]

In this way one should recognise this world as having five subtle forms and five grosser forms¹ (40).

[Note--¹The figure of ‘five’ is arrived as follows—entity with one Kalaa + entity with two Kalaas + entity with three Kalaas (as described in verse no. 39) + entity with half Kalaa + entity that has no Kalaa (as described in verse no. 40) = 5. This obviously covers the entire gamut of creation for the following reason.

The five *subtle forms* of Kalaa are the five vital winds such as Pran, Apan, Samaan, Udaan and Vyan. The vital winds are synonymous with life and consciousness in a living creature—see verse no. 17.

The other subtle Kalaas of the creature are its five Koshas or sheaths that surround its Atma. They are the Anna Maye Kosh or the food sheath, the Pran Maye Kosh or the vital wind sheath, the Mano Maye Kosh or the mind sheath, the Vigyan Maye Kosh or the intellect sheath, and the Anand Maye Kosh or the bliss sheath. It is the last that encloses the Atma.

Besides them, there are the five states of existence of consciousness—viz. the Jagrat or waking state, the Swapna or dreaming state, the Sushupta or deep sleep state, the Turiya or the post-deep sleep state of Samadhi, and the Turiyateet or the transcendental state of Smadhi at its pinnacle.

The five *grosser forms* of Kalaa are the five elements of creation such as earth, water, fire, air and sky. Since all of these are part or fraction of the same Brahm, they are all the various Kalaas of Brahm. The entire living creation is manifested from these five Kalaas because the grosser forms or elements are the building bricks for the gross body of the creature, and the subtler forms such as the different Prans infuse life in this gross body and live inside it in a subtle and imperceptible form.]”

-----*****-----*****-----

About the Author

Ajai Kumar Chhawchharia left home when he was approximately 29 years of age due to an inner call of his heart that told him to devote his life in the service of his beloved Lord God, Sri Ram. Worldly attractions did not enchant him at all. So, he didn't marry, and after his father's death he came and settled permanently in Ayodhya, the holy town in India associated with Lord Ram.

Presently he works as an honorary manager of a world famous Kanak Bhavan Temple at Ayodhya, and spends his time writing in English so that the world can access the wonderful nectar of metaphysical, spiritual and devotional philosophy that is contained in Indian scriptures for which they are so renowned.

His English Books published separately by a reputed publisher of India, the details of whom can be had by contacting the author on his email given below, include: (i) The series on '108 Upanishads' in five volumes having eighteen parts, (ii) Veda Vyas' 'Adhyatma Ramayan' in two parts, (iii) 'Devi Puran Ramayan', (iv) Valmiki's 'Adbhut Ramayan', and (v) 'Biography of Lord Ram' based on Tulsidas' books.

Genre of Writing: Spiritualism, Philosophy, Metaphysics, Religious, Devotional and Theological.

The author's Books are available for order online both in 'e-book' format and 'paper-back book' format at following websites—

- (a) www.amazon.com (in their 'kindle' + 'paper-back book' versions),
- (b) www.pothi.com (in 'paper-back book' + 'e-book' versions),
- (c) www.draft2digital.com (in 'e-book' version) through the following platforms: (i) Apple (ibooks), (ii) Barnes & Noble (nook), (iii) 24 Symbols, (iv) Kobo, (v) Page Foundry, (vi) Scribd, (vii) Tolino etc.:-

List of Books that are currently available as mentioned above :-

(A) (1) The Chariot of God: Dharma Rath; (2) OM and Naad; (3) YOGA—Its Practice and Philosophy according to the Upanishads; (4) Ram Geeta; (5) The Revelation of Creation—as envisioned in the Upanishads; (6) The Pentagon of Creation: As Expounded in the Upanishads; (7) The Triumvirate of Creation; (8) Maya: The Whirlpool of Delusions in Creation; (9) Surdas-Ram Charitawali; (10-a) The legend of Lord Shiva: Book 1 'Lord Shiva's marriage with Parvati'; (10-b) Book 2 'Lord Shiva's Sacred Hymns'; (10-c) Book 3 'Shiva's different names & their significance, Shiva Puran, Upanishads'; (11) the Mahavakyas of the Upanishads; (13) Lord Ram's marriage with Sita (based on Tulsidas' books "Ram Charit Manas", "Janki Mangal", "Ram Lala Nahachu" & "Geetawali", and sage Veda Vyas' book "Adhyatma Ramayan"; (14) "Anthology of Sacred Hymns, Stotras & Mantras of Lord Ram"; (15) "Vairagya Shatkam" of king-sage Bhartrihari; (16) An Anthology of the Sanyas Upanishads-Parts 1 and 2; (17) "Kaag-Bhusund Ramayan" or the "Aadi Ramayan" based on Tulsidas' Ram

Charit Manas; (18) The Legendary Glory of Hanuman; (19) “Narad Bhakti Sutra”—Aphorisms for Devotion for God and the Principles of Love for the Lord; (20) “Shandilya Bhakti Sutra”—Aphorisms for Devotion for God and the Principles of Love for the Lord according to the illustrious sage Shandilya; (21) “Bhakti Sutra Mala”—A Garland of Spiritual Wisdom in the form of an Anthology of Aphorisms pertaining to Bhakti or devotion, love and affection for Lord God; (22) Glory of Lord Ram’s Holy Name, Sacred Mantras, Stotras & Hymns; (23) Saints and Non-Saints: Their Distinguishing Characters and Qualities; (24) A True Guru (Qualities, Importance and Need of a True Teacher, Preceptor, Guide and Advisor); (25) “Sundar Kand” of Ram Charit Manas; (26) The Story of Ravana and the Epic War of Lanka—Told in Slow Motion (based on, and will have the full relevant Text of, Ram Charit Manas, Adhyatma Ramayan, Anand Ramayan, Geetawali Ramayan, and Kavitaawali Ramayan).

(B) Goswami Tulsidas Series: (1) Book 1- ‘Dohawali’; (2) Book 2- ‘Parvati Mangal’; (3) Book 3- ‘Kavitawali’; (4) Book 4- ‘Janki Mangal’; (5) Book 5- ‘Ram Lala Nahachu’; (6) Book 6- ‘Geetawali Ramayan’; (7) Book 7- ‘Vairagya Sandipani’; (8) Book 8- ‘Vinai Patrika’; (9) ‘Barvai Ramayan’.

Contact details of Ajai Kumar Chhawchharia—

Postal address:-36-A, Rajghat Colony, Parikrama Marg, P.O.—Ayodhya, Pin—224123, Distt. Ayodhya (Faizabad), U.P. India.

Phone:—(India) +919451290400; +919935613060.

Email of Author: (1) ajaichhawchharia@gmail.com

(2) ajaikumarbooks@gmail.com

Facebook ID: www.facebook.com/ajaikumarchhawchharia8

Linkedin: www.linkedin.com/AjaiKumarChhawchharia

Goodreads:

https://www.goodreads.com/author/show/991710.Ajai_Kumar_Chhawchharia